

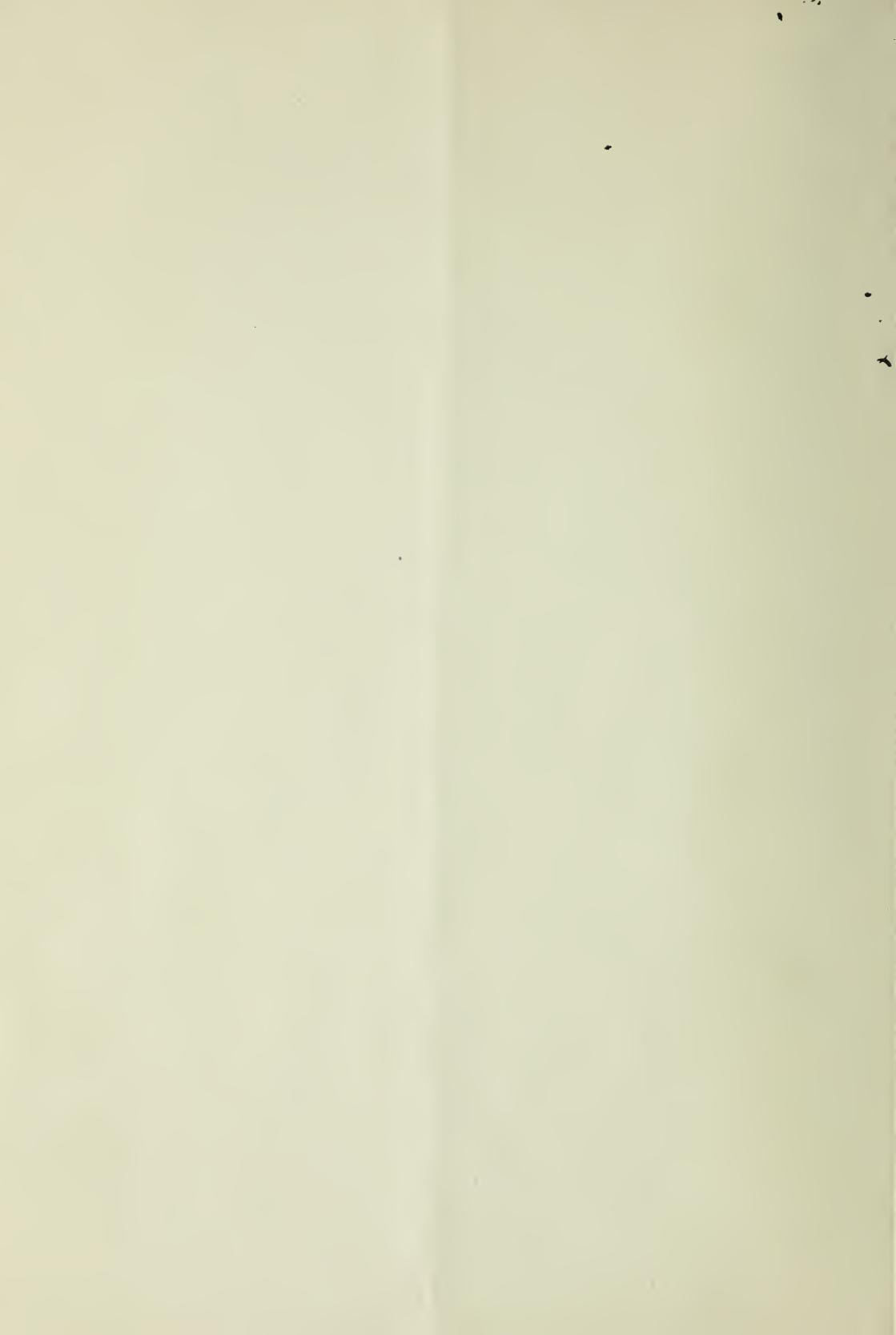


A Sketch of the Life and
Work of William P.
Pressly of Monmouth, Ill.



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WILLIAM P. PRESSLY.

William Patterson Pressly was born in the Abbeyville district, South Carolina, March 17, 1811. His parents, David Pressly and Jane Patterson Pressly were natives of Ireland. They came to America in their early youth.

The subject of this sketch was the youngest of seven children. Dr. John Taylor Pressly of the Theological Seminary at Allegheny, Pennsylvania, for many years a noble leader of the United Presbyterian church, was one of his brothers. The death of their father occurred when William was only five years old. He went to Oxford, Ohio, in his youth, and for a time attended Miami University, without completing the course of study there.

When he was of age he bought a farm in Preble county, Ohio. For a number of years he was a farmer. Then began his merchantile life. He was in business in Ohio at Hamilton, at Oxford and at Fair Haven.

In the year 1859 he moved to Monmouth, Illinois. For one year he farmed, then he opened a dry goods store on the northwest corner of the Public Square. In the year 1870 he rented one of the business rooms in the library building erected by himself.

He continued there in business till ill health compelled him to retire. For a number of years he was able to go about to see his friends and to enjoy a well-earned rest. During the last two years of his life he was confined to the house. He died April 29th, 1905, being over ninety-four years of age.

Mr. Pressly was married in 1833 to Miss Mary Gilmore of Preble county, Ohio. She died without children in 1836. After two years he was married to Miss Martha Miller of Rock-

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bridge county, Virginia. To them were born four children. Of these, Virginia died in infancy, Sarah when a very young woman, Mary Jane at the age of twenty-two. The latter was a teacher in Monmouth College for a year or two before her death. Henry K., the only son, gave his life for his country before Vicksburg in 1863. He was a young man of high character and fine ability.

During all his life Mr. Pressly gave freely to those in need and to deserving objects. No one can say how much he did in this way. It was done without display.

When his children passed away, one after another, he determined to be

HIS OWN EXECUTOR

and to make humanity his heir. Prospered in business he again and again gave half of all he owned to some good and useful object.

At an early date in the history of the then struggling Monmouth College, he deeded to it seven hundred acres of choice Iowa lands. This was at once sold for about \$5,000. In a few years it was worth far more. But even at that price, it was the largest gift given to the college by any United Presbyterian during the first twenty-five years of its existence. In giving this the donor gave one-half of what he then possessed. And the same was true of each of the large gifts made by him at later dates.

In 1870 Mr. Pressly built and gave to the community at large, the library building located at the southwest corner of the Public Square in Monmouth. This gift included income to sustain the building and to buy books.

Two years later he began his benefactions to the United Presbyterian missionary schools in Assuit, Egypt, with a gift of \$10,000 for a boys' school. In 1881 he gave again \$10,000 for a girls' school there.

When the library building erected by him became crowded with books, he enlarged it by an addition to the west and increased the grounds by buying a lot to the south.

From time to time he continued to give as he acquired

means. In this way he has given in all about \$25,000 to the Egyptian mission and about \$25,000 to the Warren county library.

He often spoke of these as the twin objects of his affection. His will divides equally between these two, what little he reserved for his own simple needs. The will was drawn fourteen years before his death. It is in his own handwriting.

These large gifts have been productive property. The income has more than doubled what he gave. The rents of "The W. P. Pressly foundation" have kept up the library building and have bought 19,000 of the 22,500 volumes on the shelves at the time of his death.

Mr. Pressly's large hearted philanthropy included both the church and the community. He was devotedly attached to the church of his fathers, the United Presbyterian. He gave largely to its College and to its Missions. He was a public spirited citizen of Monmouth. He had lived and prospered here. His customers were from all classes and from the farms all over the surrounding country. He wished to return to those from whom he had received. To do this he founded the popular department of the Warren county library. He built and gave the first building erected in Illinois, as a People's library. This he did before Chicago had its Public Library, or its Newberry or its John Crerar. No such gift had then been given by Mr. Carnegie in this state or elsewhere.

THE WARREN COUNTY LIBRARY.

The reports of the Commissioner of Education give the dates of origin of Illinois public libraries and note which ones own buildings. The only Illinois library for general use existing before 1870 and now owning its building, is the one at Alton.

The librarian at Alton, Miss Dolber, kindly furnishes the following information: "Mr. John Hayner built our library in memory of his wife and gave it to our association in 1870."

Such gifts are now a common mode of perpetuating a name and benefiting a community. But the first such building in this state bears the name of W. P. Pressly, and it will continue

to bear aloft his name. That building will be retained for revenue to sustain the library and will be a memorial of the donor. Such was the action of the Warren County Library and Reading Room Association, when it was determined that a new building, hereafter to be erected, must be in another location, where there is not the great danger of destruction by fire that there is in the present site.

It is proper in this connection that Mr. Pressly's intentions in what he did for the library be put on record. The Board of Trustees holds in trust property given by him for certain purposes. It is required of the corporation to carry out the intentions of those who give. The remarkable success which has attended the institution has been due fully as much to the practical ideas given to it as to the financial help received.

Mr. Pressly made the country as well as the city the constituency of this institution. It was his idea that a library needed for large usefulness, a larger population than that of Monmouth, just as our merchants need the country trade.

He knew that what he could give would not produce income enough to buy all needed books. He stated that he wished to furnish out of his money that which would be widely read. "I have kept goods which had a quick sale. My stock was sold out on an average every three months." These were his words in expressing his wishes on this subject. He wished his benevolence to reach the largest number possible, as he had wished for many customers in his business.

It was his purpose to make reading attractive. The statement was published, coming from him: "I will provide for the boys a greater attraction than the billiard rooms." And on another occasion the trustees received a hint from him to buy more books that the young people like. He said, "Even if they do read about bloody Indians it is better than running the streets."

The great usefulness of the modern public library has been attained by such practical ideas as these, not by an academic indifference to popular tastes in literature. First the many are provided for, then special classes of readers.

In this way has been built up in Monmouth a first class

collection of books for the purpose intended by the donor. It was the estimate of Dr. David A. Wallace, published by him shortly before his death, "that it is as well selected a library as any in the west." This is the repeated statement of the catalogue of Monmouth College to date.

There are many desirable works which the income of the "W. P. Pressly foundation" is insufficient to supply. That income is intended to meet the common wants of all readers. It is left for others to found departments for the advanced needs of this and that class.

Mr. Pressly had a broad-minded conception of the largeness of the undertaking. This library is in time to provide freely reading for young and old, for learned and ignorant, for town and country.

At the very first it was proposed by one of the trustees to call it the Pressly Library. Mr. Pressly refused to allow this. He wished credit only for what he did. He did not wish to monopolize credit for what he felt sure would in time be done by others. He spoke of all that he did as only caring for the infancy of the institution, saying, "The child must creep before it can walk."

He lived to see some of this expected growth. From Mr. John D. Thompson, from Mrs. Sarah C. Simmons and from the community at large has come to the library as much money as all that Mr. Pressly gave it. And what has been received from him and from others has been a natural growth. It has not come by begging. Others have wished of their own accord to have their names identified with this work. Mr. Pressly very wisely saw to it that this is not a one-man library in its origin nor a one-class library in its intent.

His conservative, prudent methods have been impressed on the business management of the library. It has lived within its means. It has accumulated funds. The gifts received have not been used up. They have been increased. From the yearly income a surplus is continually saved to invest. Mr. Pressly was intensely practical. He saw to it that this gift of his was managed on business methods, by business men. The money has

been used to furnish what is absolutely needed, not for anything else. Over the door leading to the reading room, the donor of the building had placed the Latin motto of the Ohio school where he once was a student, "Prodesse, quam conspici."

In all that Mr. Pressly has done for others, at home and abroad, he acted on his own judgment and according to his own lights. He was his own executor. He planned his philanthropy with rare good sense.

MISSION SCHOOLS IN EGYPT.

He gave for native education in Egypt, because he had observed that a German clerk could sell more goods to Germans than he could. He thought that educated natives could teach, or preach, or conduct the affairs of government with most success **among** their own people. He gave for the education of girls in **the** same land in order that educated men might have suitable wives, and that homes might be purified and character elevated by mothers. In the girls' school to which he gave, Miss Martha J. McKown, formerly of Monmouth, was a devoted worker.

The same practical common sense was shown in what he did for Monmouth. In 1868 a public reading room, supplied only with periodicals was opened here. This was organized and helped by Judge Quinby. For two years Mr. Pressly watched its workings. He went to Burlington, Iowa, and sat for a whole day in the library to which Senator Grimes had recently given \$5,000. His wish was to see for himself what a public library is. He came back determined that Monmouth shall have one.

The remarkable success of these well planned gifts in Egypt and in this country was a great satisfaction to Mr. Pressly. For over thirty years he lived to enjoy seeing the results of what he had done. He read with profound gratitude accounts of the immense usefulness of the Mission Schools which he had helped. These have had a remarkable success. They have been managed with great ability by the missionaries of the United Presbyterian church. Mr. William E. Curtis is a most competent judge of this by reason of his training, ability and wide acquaintance with foreign affairs. He has very kindly sent on for use in

this sketch, some proof sheets of his book on Egypt, now in press. From it the following extracts are taken. They refer to the schools to which Mr. Pressly gave: "The American school at Assuit educates more competent teachers than any other institution in Egypt. A great deal of attention is paid to business and industrial training. The missionary schools for boys are popular because they furnish a better education than can be obtained elsewhere. Nearly every graduate of the schools maintained by the American United Presbyterian Mission has succeeded in securing lucrative employment as teacher or in the administrative departments of the government.

"Many families are beginning to realize that it is an advantage for a girl to know how to read and write and cipher. She makes a more useful wife and mother and a more competent house-keeper. This applies particularly to the middle classes and to the Copts."

Such words of commendation as these came often to Mr. Pressly, concerning the work which his money was doing at Assuit.

Mr. Pressly also rejoiced in the good use made of his gifts at home. He saw the college which he had helped in the day of its greatest need become the leading college of his church, with its graduates widely known in her pulpits, in her missions and in all the walks of life. For years up to the time of his death he read in each successive catalogue of the college this statement of how he had helped the college through a library for all this community; "Few institutions afford library privileges superior to those of Monmouth College. Through the liberality of Mr. W. P. Pressly the Warren County Library was established in 1870. This is as carefully selected a library as can be found in the west."

He saw branches of that library started in the country, where he intended it to be used as much as in town. His purpose as to the department which he endowed he saw faithfully adhered to. The statement was made by his pastor, Rev. J. A. Burnett in his funeral address: "It was his desire, which desire has been fully carried out, that this should be a people's library,

where the many could be accommodated in their literary tastes."

In health and in sickness, in active life and in the lonely days of advanced old age, Mr. Pressly has often expressed his great satisfaction with the work done by his gifts. While his health allowed, he was daily in the reading room. Almost the last time that he was there he said to one of the trustees. 'I thank God that I was led to build this building.'

Mr. Pressly was a thoroughly religious man. He had a remarkable ability in apt quotation of Scripture. During the last two years of his life his mind was enfeebled and darkened. He did not know his most intimate friends. But he knew his Bible with wonderful accuracy.

His was a religion of devotion, of practical beneficence, of liberal fellowship and humanity. He honored all men. He was a devoted United Presbyterian. For some years he was a member of the Presbyterian Church, on account of his affection for Dr. R. C. Matthews. He taught for years, a Bible class in the Methodist Sunday School. Some of his intimate friends were Catholics. He stated that he wished Catholic books bought for the library, in proportion as they are read. This is, of course, the usual custom of public libraries. Mr. Pressly esteemed true men outside of all church lines. At the funeral of his friend, Mr. J. W. Scott, whom he had known long as a pioneer business man of Monmouth, he was asked to say a few words. He began "It has been said that an honest man is the noblest work of God. Mr. Scott was that man."

Such were the broad sympathies of him who gave to this community an institution which is for all.

Mr. Pressly's sterling character and rare practical ability was recognized and honored. He was made a Trustee of Monmouth College in 1859 when he first came to this city. He was one of its directors during forty-four years. For most of that time he was an elder of the First United Presbyterian congregation. He was an elder in the Presbyterian church for several years and was once a delegate to its General Assembly. He was the president of the Warren County Library and Reading Room Association from 1870 to 1903.

At his funeral all classes did him honor. The circuit court, then in session, adjourned and the members of the bar attended in a body. Eloquent and appreciative addresses were made by the Rev. J. A. Burnett, pastor of the First United Presbyterian church, Dr. T. H. McMichael, president of Monmouth College and Hon. R. J. Grier, judge of the circuit court. These addresses are printed herewith. They are the words of men who knew of what they did testify concerning a most beneficent life.

Outline of Address by Rev. John A. Burnett, Pastor First United Presbyterian Church, Monmouth, Ill.

As quietly and peacefully as the darkness of night is dispelled by the gray of the morning, which in turn is followed by the full glory of the rising sun; as unobserved as the river mingles its waters with the sea into which it flows, this father in Israel passed from the scenes of this life to the glory of the life everlasting. I did not know him as most of you knew him. During my residence of thirteen months in this city I visited him many times, but his mental condition was such that it has been only within the past two weeks that he has realized who I was. I can only therefore, speak in a general way of him, and endeavor to bring to you the leading elements of his character as I have learned of his life from others. The one thing that has impressed me above all else is the marvelous visions of this life. Mr. Pressly was born in 1811, and from the time of his ability to fully appreciate things about him, on for a period of about seventy five years, he has witnessed wonderful transformations in scientific development, in the material, commercial and social progress of our country. He has been face to face with the events of three wars. He was most closely identified with the conflict from which resulted the firmer union of the country, for he had given his only son, whose life was sacrificed at the siege of Vicksburg. Each new year of the century in which he lived gave a new and wonderful vision of human progress.

Concerning his character there are some things that impress us deeply: 1. He was a good man. Good in the real sense as revealing this qualities of life that grow out of a true heart.

Good as Barnabos was good, who was "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." Good as Jehoiada the priest was good, concerning whom it is written, "he had done good in Israel." Such goodness indeed as comes out of the diviner life within and draws its power from Him who was good in the largest and best sense of which earth or heaven has thought. No talent, no philanthropy can enable use to do good without the faith that worketh by love. His faith was abounding; it was as simple as that of a child; it was trustful and hopeful. Such goodness as he possessed you and I may emulate.

2. He loved the Church and was deeply interested in its welfare. Two weeks ago I went into his room and said, "Mr. Pressly, do you know me?" "Yes," he replied, "you are the clergyman, and I want to say to you that you need never be ashamed of your calling." For a number of years he had been an elder in this congregation, also a teacher in the Sabbath school, and for a time its superintendent. Truly "he loved our church," being interested not only in the local work, but in all that touched the church's life in this country and in the mission fields. He was born in a Christian home at a time when the church was more and meant more to its members than it does today. The whole atmosphere of his life was about the church. Here the life caught its inspirations; here reverence was deepened; here everything centered that touched the religious and spiritual life. His brother, Dr. John T. Pressly, was one of the most influential leaders of the church in his day.

Nor was his vision narrowed by the limits of the congregation or even of the church in this country, it was broadened to the needs of Egypt where the United Presbyterian church was endeavoring to uplift humanity. Just eight years and three months ago today, at this very hour, I delivered an address in the U. P. Home for the Aged, Wilkinsburg, Pa., as the representative of the Pittsburgh Ministerial Association at the funeral of Miss Martha J. McKown. It was she who interested Mr. Pressly in the girls' school in Assiut, Egypt. Concerning this the following is written in a brief sketch of Miss McKown's life. "Miss McKown went home (1881) nominally to rest, but really to bend

every energy towards securing funds for building* * * * Love for the school carried Miss McKown through many an arduous task during her year and a half in America. It was a day when hope was at the ebb and the sky had lost its rose tints that she called at the home of Mr. William Pressly, of Monmouth. That day was painted in most vivid colors in the picture gallery of Miss McKown's memory. It was no wonder that she liked to recall it. Even to the listener it made a striking picture, in which the simplicity of Mr. Pressly's character and surroundings brought into strong relief the magnificence of his self-sacrificing generosity.

Mr. Pressly's response to Miss McKown's plea was a gift of \$10,000, of which half was to be spent on the new building and the remainder was to constitute a fund to aid in supporting pupils too poor to defray the entire expenses of their board and education. With the moneys secured from other sources, this magnificent donation seemed to sweep away every remaining difficulty, and it was with a full heart that Miss McKown christened the girls' college of the future the Pressly Memorial Institute.

3. Mr. Pressly was practically benevolent. Concerning the above gift, Professor T. H. Rogers, a personal friend and adviser of Mr. Pressly, tells me that when he was considering this gift he talked the matter over with him, and this was the thought expressed, "When I kept store in Hamilton, Ohio, I had a German clerk and he could sell to the Germans of that place, of whom there were many, three times as many goods as I." So, he argued, natives prepared for the work could do infinitely more for their people than the missionaries and teachers sent out from

y. Thus twenty four years ago Mr. Pressly acted upon the thought which is the established policy of the Foreign Mission Boards of all the churches today. But this was not all he did for the Church in Egypt. In the historical sermon preached by Dr. Alexander Young one of the early pastors of this church, at the time the congregation entered the present building, the following is recorded, "William P. Pressly, by careful attention to business and strict honesty in all his dealings,

was financially prospered. The college and congregation are indebted to his liberality in a commendable degree, but the Warren County Library stands, largely through him, as an institution of lasting benefit to the citizens of Monmouth, and the provision made for its continuance and increasing influence, deserves the gratitude of all who enjoy the benefit of his liberality; and, with the divine blessing, succeeding generations may thankfully rejoice."

Our whole Church has special cause to be thankful for another institution. Perhaps in February, 1872, (nine years before the above gift) Mr. Pressly said, "How can money be used just now for the best interests of the Church?" Several objects were needing help, but the opinion was expressed that our mission in Egypt was, at least, a deserving field; and as Dr. Hogg of that mission expected to visit our General Assembly in Washington, Iowa, in May, he could consult him respecting Egypt. The result was a donation of ten thousand dollars in gold (and gold was at a premium of about twenty per cent at that time) to found a college at Assiut, for training young men for the ministry, and both men and women as missionaries and teachers in other lines of usefulness.

In more recent years about two thousand dollars have been given, making a total (with the gold premium) of about twenty four thousand dollars to the Egyptian mission.

He was deeply interested in Monmouth College, and gave seven hundred acres of land in Iowa to that institution. In 1870 he founded the Warren County Library into which he has put nearly twenty five thousand dollars. In this, as in his other gifts, is seen the practicalness of his benevolence. It was his desire, which desire has been fully carried out, that this should be a people's library, a place where the many, and not the few, could be accommodated in their literary tastes. Thus so long as people read and think Mr. Pressly will be known and honored in this city.

For more than a generation his money has been doing good, and how much more—infinitely more—this has accomplished than if he had waited to have disposed of his accumula-

tions at his death. What satisfaction must have come to him in the reflex blessings of his continued thoughtfulness and benevolence.

We are here, then, to honor the memory of him who has woven his name in gracious benedictions into the life of the church and of this city. Throughout this community, and to far off Egypt, the influences he exerted have flowed in abundant blessing. He rests in peace and it becomes us to imitate him in so far as his life followed the thought and life of Him, whom he served so faithfully.

Remarks by T. H. McMichael, D. D., President of Monmouth College.

It is mine this afternoon to bring to this service the tribute of Monmouth College. Monmouth College stands indebted to William Pressly and desires here to acknowledge this indebtedness. He was her friend at a time when friendship meant much to her and to her future. For forty-four years he was connected with her in an official way. This is longer than anyone else has ever been connected with her history. It is longer, I dare say, than anyone will ever be connected with her again. All but five of our forty-eight catalogues have contained his name. In looking over the list of trustees for 1859, I find that with Mr. Pressly's passing, one only remains. Mr. Truman Eldridge of Roseville. Of the twenty-five all the others have long passed from the scenes of their earthly labors.

You have often looked out over a clearing from which all the trees have been cut save one or two. These stand rugged storm-torn, and lonely, defying the blasts, long after their companions have gone down. And so Mr. Pressly was one who long survived the companions of his early and his middle life. Of those who had stood with him in his noble enterprises, he was for years almost the sole survivor. There is something pathetic in such a sight, and yet something suggestive and almost magnificent.

How fast the older generation, the generation that made

the city and the college, have been going from us! Within the two short years in which I have stood in official relation to Monmouth College, four of the old guard have gone, I. M. Kirkpatrick, Judge J. J. Glenn, Draper Babcock, and now the oldest of them all in point of age and service, William Pressly. How much the city owes to such men as these; the old guard that stood by the College in the days of her infancy! It was because of the energy and self-sacrifice they put into her life, it was because of what they did and what they gave, that she stands today as one of the institutions that makes for the betterment of the city and the community.

As has already been mentioned in this service, William Pressly's purse was open for Monmouth College. She shared in his beneficence at a time in her history when financial help was needed, and when it meant much to her life. To many of us there comes the memory of Mr. Pressly as we used to see his familiar figure upon our streets. He had his peculiarities and his oddities, and as we marked these we did not always think, perhaps, of the greatness of the man. But he was great in the very truest sense. He was one of this old world's noblemen, and has left it better because he lived in it.

“O! never a sun like his went out
Or faded behind some hill,
But the lingering sky shone all about
With the joy of its radiance still.”

Yes, this shadowed world is still kissed by the joy of the radiance of his quiet, unostentatious life. Yonder in Egypt that radiance still lingers in the Pressly Memorial Institute; here in our own city it abides in the Pressly Library, and yonder at the College in the Pressly Professorship of Chemistry and Physics. Monmouth College stands indebted to him. Monmouth College wishes to acknowledge this indebtedness and to join with you, his fellow-citizens, in doing honor to his memory.

Address of Hon. R. J. Grier, Judge of the Circuit Court.

It is mine today, as a citizen of this community, and in its behalf, to pay tribute to the departed for benefits conferred.

A grateful people honor and mourn those who have been public benefactors. It may be that "he too serves who only stands and waits," but the affections of the people go out to him who has been mindful of their welfare, and active for their good.

Loving friends weep, and mourn the loss of a dear one they will see no more. The rending of the tender ties of affection entails anguish and grief upon those near and dear. The darkened room—the sable garb—the tear-stained eye, tell a tale of sorrow and bereavement. But besides the grief of friends, the passing of one who has been a public benefactor, one whose humanitarian heart has gone out in love and good works for the betterment of his kind, casts a gloom of sadness over the community, and the busy, striving, absorbed, but grateful public stop to acknowledge their indebtedness of gratitude, and pay their tribute of respect and appreciation to the departed.

Father Pressly was a man of the common people. He sprang from them, and he was of them. His life was with them and his thought was for them. Humble in his tastes and simple in his life, he was of the masses, yet none, respectable, were so poor as to be beneath him, and by reason of his endowments, his honesty and the purity of his life, none were so great as to be above him.

It is no fulsome praise to say he was a humanitarian in the largest sense. His thought was for the betterment of the people. The dream and ambition of his life was the elevation of the masses. For them he strove and saved and built, and to them he dedicated the energies and savings of his life. The foundations of the monument which he promoted, and founded, and which he has left in this community, were laid in the love of humanity, and an anxious solicitude for their welfare. While others established libraries for the learned and the select, he established his for all. I am advised that the building which his generosity has dedicated in this city, is the first in this state,

to be erected and dedicated to the use of a public library. His generosity and the scope of his scheme knew no caste. The poor and the rich, the learned and the unlearned, the erudite and the simple, the adult and the child, were alike welcome to his benefaction. It was his purpose that the opportunity and inducement for information, betterment, and enjoyment should be open equally to all.

The great body of this people were by him made heirs and beneficiaries to the investigation, the discovery, the thought, and the literary talent of the ages. The chronicles of the historian—the reasoning and deductions of the philosopher—the researches and discoveries of the scientist—the flowers and songs of the poets—the story of the novelist—were brought by his beneficence and placed at the hand of every member of this community.

For the simple choosing they were made the student or the companion, not only of the current thought of the day, but of the bright and illustrious minds of the past. With its treasured wealth of learning and literature, his gift has made the brilliant authors of every land and every time, the household and fireside companions of every family and person in Warren County who will accept and associate with them. With this library at command, no person has right to complain of their moral or intellectual surroundings—their companions are of their own choosing. Such an institution is a fixed society, whose atmosphere is a constantly applied influence for the elevation and refinement of all those within the radius of its influence.

Father Pressly is gone—his personal efforts are ended—he lived to see the ambition of his life realized.

His toil and saving and industry bore fruit to his eyes, and his philanthropic heart was gladdened by the result of his efforts.

The first concrete idea of a public library in this community took form on January 12th, 1836, in the very infancy of the county. It died before maturity. It was revived in 1868, but not until 1870, when Mr. Pressly came to the rescue and

shouldered the burden, did the scheme give promise of success. When he gave it a local habitation in the building it now occupies, and an income from the savings of his life, then did it first become in fact an institution of the community in perpetuity. I would not, for an instant, detract one iota from the credit and praise due those who so ably and persistently, with time and energy and money and ability, have seconded and furthered the efforts to establish and maintain this institution, and carry it to success, but to him whose body lies here today undoubtedly belongs the credit of having made possible this great power for good, for which this community is so deeply indebted.

His purpose and thought is best given in his own words, published in the city papers before he built the building.

LIBRARY AND READING ROOM.

Mr. Editor: As there exists a wrong idea in regard to the contemplated Library and Reading Room, permit us (by request of others) briefly to state that, as the case now stands, it is proposed to erect a two-story brick building in the southwest corner of the square, that being the most eligible site, everything considered, that could at present be obtained; said building to be near 42x70 or 75 feet, containing two business rooms in the basement and one above; the rent of the lower rooms to be used in sustaining the property and furnishing, from year to year, a fresh supply of reading matter for the use and benefit of the upper room. The building first contemplated might have accommodated the citizens of this place, but inasmuch as under God we are principally indebted to the citizens of the country for the means to be used in its construction, if for no higher motive, gratitude towards them bids us now remember them as a party to be benefitted, and thus made a party interested in patronizing and sustaining their own institution, in common with the citizens of this place; hence, the present plan was adopted, which, it is hoped, may prove amply sufficient for the use designed for years to come. We trust that as we become educated as to the real value of a Library and Reading Room in our own midst, it may gradually increase in its efficiency for good, and ultimately become an oasis where many a weary pilgrim may obtain refreshment long after its projectors, and the present Board of Trust, shall have passed away.

"O all the pleasures noble and refined
Which form the taste and cultivate the mind,
The 'feast of reason,' which from reading springs,
To reasoning man the highest solace brings.

"Tis books a lasting pleasure can supply—
Charm while we live, and teach us how to die."

W. P. PRESSLY.

Father Pressly has gone from us in life, he is about to go from us in flesh, but his great work will remain with us, and the spirit in which it was given, will continue to exert its subtle influences among the people and bear its fruits in the greater intelligence and in the higher and purer lives of the people.



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